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ABSTRACT

This paper identifies four models of educational administration--the rational, mechanistic, organic, and bargaining models--and argues that a fifth model of leadership--a caring model--is needed. The ethic of caring (Nodding, 1986) is reciprocal, natural, and ethical and emphasizes connection, responsibilities, and relationships. Creating a model of caring involved secondary analysis of data originally collected to describe career assistant principals (CAPs). These data were derived from participant observation, interviews with 10 CAPs, focus group interviews with 14 award-winning assistant principals, and a mailed survey of 26 award-winners in other states. Three interrelated patterns of leadership emerged from the data: (1) CAPs derived the strongest satisfaction from knowing that their actions helped students and teachers; (2) their career adjustments have been affected by their desire to retain flexibility and discretion; and (3) their value of caring extended into the community. It is recommended that professional association, university, and district policies incorporate the alternative career motivations of CAPs, and that caring should be modelled as a valuable function. In conclusion, caring is a necessary condition for transforming schools into successful living and learning environments. (LMI)

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# CARING AS CAREER: An Alternative Model for Educational Administration

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# CARING AS CAREER: AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

## Introduction

Traditionally, research on the administrative career draws from role theory, leadership and decisionmaking theory, and professional socialization theory (e.g. Becker & Strauss, 1956; Blood, 1966; Breer & Locke, 1965; Griffiths, Goldman & McPartland, 1965). Such theories have helped to frame questions about how to train, select and assess efficient school managers. Increasingly, however, theorists and researchers have challenged these theories and demanded expansion of the assumptions upon which they are based.

Sergiovanni (199x) identifies four models of educational administration, four "systematic approximations of reality" that guide administrative practice. They are the "rational," "mechanistic," "organic," and "bargaining" models, which are driven, respectively, by Scientific Management, Bureaucratic, Collegial and Political theories of management (pp. 12-13). Prompted by lessons from fieldwork with "career assistant principals"[1] and inspired by Noddings' (1992, 1986) work on the ethic of care , we argue that a fifth model of leadership — a caring model — is needed if our purpose as educators is to nurture children and teach them to be caring, moral, productive members of society.

## Old Models

### Rational and Mechanistic Models

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[1] Career assistant principals are administrators who by choice or circumstance have been assistants for severl years, are generally satisfied in that position, and are not actively trying to "move up" the career ladder (Marshall, 1992).

Traditionally, good administrators have been defined as people who manage well in the carefully-orchestrated, hierarchical organization of bureaucracy. They are organized, attentive to the mechanics of the organization and oriented toward managing to maximize efficiency. Planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, ordering, reporting, and budgeting. POSDCORB is a traditional litany used to describe managerial tasks. Following the basic precepts of scientific and bureaucratic management, they delineate clear objectives, emphasize accountability and control, and promote efficiency by rewarding technical competence. They sort and categorize people (by age, gender, skill, intelligence, training, status) and then match them to roles and tasks that presumably will allow them to make the maximal contribution. They understand and enforce the gap between management and workers by enforcing the schedules, priorities, rules and roles prescribed in policy. All administrators need to do, says the corollary to such mechanistic theories, is "find people who could be programmed into this design"(Sergiovanni, p. 14).

Collegial and Political Models

Countering these impersonal input-output theories of leadership were people-oriented theories that recognized the "human needs" of both individuals and groups. Studies by Maslow, McGregor, Arygris, Bennis and Likert (Sergiovanni, 19xx) gave rise to collegial theories of management that stressed employees' social needs and their desire to be challenged, recognized and involved in decision-making and planning. Once people were recognized as important players in the educational enterprise, the shift to political and collegial theories of management and their orientation to "outside" forces

was a natural next step. Administrators who could manage people (inside and outside the school) by manipulating information and addressing their perceived needs were seen as good leaders who should be promoted.

No matter what model prevails, a uniform mindset frames administrative activity in a bureaucratic hierarchy of school administration: do whatever it takes — make deals, compromise, "satisfice" (March & Simon, 1958), conform — to get to a higher position.

Assumptions, Implications & Limitations of Traditional Models

No administrator adheres exclusively to any one theory of management nor relies on any one model of leadership in day-to-day practice. On the contrary, most administrators draw from several. However, in order to recognize what is missing from theory, it is useful to identify some of the values and ideologies traditionally associated with these models. They include these precepts and beliefs:

a. Rational planning and decision-making are "topdown." Only those at the top have the right to judge, command, make policy and assign tasks, orders, duties and prescriptions;

b. Fairness is achieved by equal application of law and policy;

c. Good leadership is value-neutral and apolitical;

d. Effective leaders are proper, serious, impersonal and detached;

e. Communications are formal, controlled, and uni-directional, being handed down from the top;

f. Organizational boundaries are tightly controlled; tasks are finite, predictable, and manageable; goals are short-term and outcomes are quantifiable.

Traditional administrators work within structures derived from traditional models. They demonstrate and maintain their legitimacy by controlling people and activities while complying with professional association standards and credentialling procedures. Documented training, certification, degrees, and professional honors are the most tangible evidence of ability in administration. The organizational hierarchy supports this brand of legitimacy by allowing policymaking, order-giving, supervision and evaluation functions to be carried out only by people with the proper credentials.

Although this characterization of administrative ideology and practice may sound like a caricature, we see evidence in administrator assessment center in-basket activities, teacher accountability systems and a concurrent devaluing of teacher leadership, the still pervasive preference for leaders who "run a tight ship," and the behaviors of administrators who carefully separate themselves from contact with students and teachers that elements of such traditional thinking survive and thrive.

## The Need for Alternative Models

### Critiquing Leadership Theory

These traditional models for leadership are no longer valid; practical realities and scholarly critiques demand new models. The paradigms framing previous theories, research and practice in leadership have built-in fallacies (McCall & Lombardo, 1978): one is that of white male superiority and dominance (Blackmore, 1993; Marshall, 1988; and Regan, 1990), another is the inevitability and superiority of bureaucracy (Clark & Meloy, 1988; Ferguson, 1984). Leadership theory was developed by observations of white males working in leadership positions in bureaucracies. The behaviors and values

of women, minorities, and people who cannot get through the bureaucratic socialization processes to attain leadership positions were, therefore, excluded from research and theorizing on leadership. Behaviors, backgrounds, appearance, language and values that were different or atypical were simply labelled as nonleadership-like, deviant or deficient. Diversity, alternative models, or any variations from the norm were seen as signs of incompetence. The corollary to this circular logic was that people at lower levels of bureaucracy could not possibly be performing in leader-like ways because they were not designated leaders.

Critiquing Educational Administration Research

Most educational administration research still focuses on the highly visible, line administrators who have the most power and authority: principals and superintendents. This focus on people at the top leaves unexplored questions about career choices, work other than decision-making and policy enforcement, and alternative manifestations of leadership that may be exhibited by other professional educators — teachers, women, minorities and risk-takers — who cannot or choose not to make it through the traditional administrative filtering systems.

Critiquing the Model of the Neutral Technical Bureaucrat

New theoretical developments cast aside the assumption that schools are apolitical and school administrators are neutral technical bureaucratic managers who merely coordinate work, enforce rules, and maximize efficiency. First, researchers expanded the focus by adding questions about organizational climate and culture, leaders' "vision," leaders' meaning-making and cultural leadership. Also, theorists proposed (e.g. Foster, 1986;

Giroux, 1992; Purpel, 1988) and researchers demonstrated (e.g. Kasten & Asbaugh, 1991; Marshall, 1992) that administrators are not neutral technical bureaucrats: they operate from their values. A radical new view subsequently asserted that administrators' actions are not only influenced by their values, but that administrators actually should take stands and articulate their platforms (Sergiovanni, 1992). Further, Foster (1986) asserts that administrators should take stands as critical humanists, constantly critiquing their organizations the emancipatory goals of democracy. Finally, the feminist critique of Noddings (1992) challenges school leaders to adopt the ethic of caring so that schools can become caring communities that nurture all children — regardless of their race, class or gender. Regan (1990) demostrates how she as a feminist administrator, incorporated caring, collaboration and fentleness in administrtive behavior. She also points out how this defies the norms and practices in the admiistrative culture.

Critiquing Policy and Practice

Traditional theories and the assumptions, policies and practices associated with them have shaped school schedules, accounting systems, rules, ways of managing, sorting, and controlling students. They shape the systems for training, recruiting, selecting, assessing, promoting and rewarding school administrators. They have not, however, served us well in identifying creative and inspirational, never mind caring leaders. They have not led to diversity in leadership positions. They have not created schools that have enough meaning, connection and sese of community to capture the excitement of citizens, parents and children. And they have not created schools capable of teaching our children that having babies as teenagers, committing suicide, driving drunk and killing one another in numbers previously unimaginable is not just risky but unconscionable.

Nell Noddings (1993) said, teenagers today are seeking something in drugs, frighter.ng lyrics, thundering rhythms, irresponsible sex, and the closed societies of gangs and cliques." Noddings asserts that schools need to be organized as places where children seek wisdom, where like Socrates, teachers must ask hard questions and join with students in seeking answers about the "good life," citizenship and the responsibilities that accompany it, good and evil, play and work, friendship and love. "When [students] are encouraged to ask, How? Why? and On what grounds? they and their teachers will enter the conversation of immortals. No narrow curriculum, no prescribed pedagogical method will contain leaders. Perhaps that is what we are afraid of." Few policymakers and administrators are finding ways to structure and lead schools to be places where students quest for wisdom and community. Accountability and tightened supervision and reliable chains-of-command are more likely policy thrusts.

Incorporating the Theory of Caring

Noddings (1992) seeks proposes a new paradigm for schooling: "We should educate all our children not only for competence but also for caring" (p. xiv), she writes. The theory, models, and practices of caring do not fit into traditional languages describing schooling leadership and school organizations. Nodding's conceptualization of caring incorporates the following elements:

a. Caring is **reciprocal.** It fulfils the fundamental human need for security and attachment in the individual cared for and provides satisfaction to the person doing the caring.

b. Caring is both **natural and ethical.** When we exhibit caring through our actions or words, we are practicing what Noddings (1986) terms natural caring. She believes it is natural caring that "establishes the

> ideal for ethical caring" (p. 497). Gilligan (1982), in turn, defines ethical caring as "an injunction to act responsively toward self and others and thus to sustain connection" (p. 148). In other words, not only can we exhibit caring through practice - by the things we say and do, we can also build an ethic of caring that serves as a moral touchstone to guide ancestors in the many ethical decisions they face each day.

Although such precepts may fit with some personal interaction that the place in schools do not fit into the assumptions built into the structure and organization of administrating curriculum and teaching in schools. Models for incorporating caring would require new language, new assumptions, policies, practices, and theories.

Proposing a Model of Caring

Translated into practice, the ethic of caring **emphasizes connection responsibilities and relationships**, not rights and rules. It involves a fidelity to relationships with others that is based on more than just personal liking or regard. An ethic of caring does not establish guiding principles to follow[2] but instead creates possibilities and opportunities for virtues to be exercised and encourages good works (Tronto, 1987).Caring in schools requires **continuity, confirmation** and the **ability to listen actively and carefully.** By confirmation, Noddings means the "act of affirming and encouraging the best in others"(p. 25). Because caring cannot be accomplished by formula but is, instead, situation and person specific, it requires the caregiver to be **flexible, responsive and attentive** to holistic concerns. In order to encourage good works, Noddings believes school personnel must exhibit caring through **modeling, dialogue** and **persistence**. She contends that if we want students to learn how to care for themselves and each other, administrators and teachers

must engage in genuine dialogue with them, build trust through repeated and consistent interactions, and model caring by living it. In addition, administrators must also provide students with opportunities to practice caring.

Arguing that caring "has its own rationality or reasonableness," Noddings nevertheless insists that "its emphasis is on living together, on creating, maintaining, and enhancing positive relations — not on decision making in moments of high moral conflict, nor on justification" (Noddings, 1992, p. 21). Her vision is at once convincing and appealing, but it is not unproblematic. Career pressures, bureaucratic structures that extend well beyond the school walls, and endless demands for quick decisions and fast action create a countervailing force that pulls principals and superintendents toward the traditional models of school administration. Fisher and Tronto (1990) assert that in traditional bureaucracies the main goal is standardization and bureaucratic maintenance — the antithesis of situation-specific, holistic caring. As a result, both carers and caring are devalued. Carers are disempowered; their practice is relegated to the low status connected with teachers' and "women's work."

Thus, research to identify new models of leadership is needed. Is there, in reality, enacted leadership that incorporates caring? If so, where is it found, how is it supported, and what are its consequences? Research on educators who exhibit caring can begin to answer these questions. Such research can identify the patterns, the problems and can begin to build alterntive models for leadership.

**Research Incorporating the Critiques**

We now present research that does identify and explain caring. Through a secondary analysis of data originally collected to provide a portrait of career assistant principals (CAPs). By choosing to stay in positions low in the administrative hierarchy and yet appearing to be fulfilled and satisfied with their careers, CAPs defy traditional theory and administrative career norms. The original data colletion goal was to uncover the training values, supports, motivations, and satisfactions of these anomalous individuals. As the project progressed, however, it became clear that traditional theoretical perspectives from educational administration failed to explain CAPs' work patterns and life choices.

## Methods, Techniques, and Data Sources

Qualitative methodology was the chosen, overarching methodology for this multi-method study exploring the inner motivations and daily work of CAPs. First, two researchers (Marshall and Steele) conducted participant-observation and open ended interviewing of 10 CAPs (supplemented by interviews with their spouses, principals and co-workers).[2] To gain a wider perspective and verify the findings from intensive observation, we conducted focus-group interviews with 14 award-winning assistant principals and conducted a mail survey (with 26 responses) of award winners from other states. Data included field notes, taped interviews, documents (e.g. job descriptions, assessment center outcomes, policy statements) and surveys.

The total sample included 50 assistant principals from nearly one half of the states; it included urban, rural and suburban districts. Respondents' experience in the assistant principalship ranged from one to 23 years in

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[2] They were identified through National Association of Secondary School Principals' mailing lists, nominations by peerts, and follow-up phone calls.

elementary, middle, and secondary schools serving populations with varied demographic and economic characteristics. School sizes ranged from enrollments of 500 to 1800; schools had from one to three assistants. [3]

In this paper we present new findings that resulted from a secondary analysis of these data — an analysis that was guided by the critiques of traditional theories discussed above.

Caring, and values were analytic themes in the secondary analysis. Few scholars have ventured beyond theorizing about administrators' values into the philosophical domain that asks "which values? toward what end?" Yet, it was these very questions that kept rising to the surface. Foster (1986) advocates critical humanist educational leaders; Giroux (1992) wants leaders for democratic institutions. However, it was Noddings' focus on caring in schools that became the most fruitful frame for our secondary analysis of data derived from the real-world activities and sentiments of CAPs. No explanation of their careers, daily work, and life choices made sense without incorporating this perspective on caring.

As a group, CAPs exhibit the caring behaviors Noddings describes, and in the process they contribute to building nurturant and connected school environments that fit her conceptualization of communities of care. The CAPs we studied have articulated rationales for their behavior and have made explicit career choices to protect their discretion and flexibility so that they can stay close to students and teachers and find ways to assist directly in students' development. They are motivated by an ethic of caring rather than the "rational" choice model that seeks upward mobility.

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[3] The findings emerged in the form of patterns prevalent across the data on CAPs and were reported in fuller detail in *The Unsung Role of the Career Assistant Principal* (Marshall, 1993).

This secondary analysis of the CAP data, then, focuses on caring. It is framed by Noddings' perspective. The three authors independently generated themes from reading and re-reading the data, then collectively constructed the dominant themes to compile a description of caring in administration. By comparing the leadership styles, practices and personal ethos of CAPs detailed in our field notes and interview data with the characteristics of the archtypical "good administrator," we were able to identify three main themes, and patterns of leadership, and calues and ideologies shared by these CAPs. We believe these findings are the beginning of model-building a caring model of educational leadership. We also identified organizational structures which affect CAPs' ability to enact the caring model.

## Results: Themes and Patterns

Three strong and intertwined patterns emerged from the data:

1. CAPs' strongest satisfaction comes from knowing that their actions help the children and teachers whose lives they touch. "Seeing the worst kids turned around" was a typical statement about job rewards. Observational notes verified CAPs' constant efforts to help children and teachers stay connected to the school mission and to create meaning out of students' and teachers' participation in their schools.

2. CAPs' career adjustments have been affected by their desire to retain the flexibility and discretion afforded them as behind-the-scenes administrators. They avoid the political controversies that would bring visibility and scrutiny and, as assistants, they can avoid the vagaries of district politics. They act as street level bureaucrats (Weatherley & Lipsky, 1974) as they devise creative and caring solutions that are sensitive to individuals' problems and needs (ranging from installing a punching bag in a storage room for a hyperactive middle-schooler to creating a cadre of permanent substitutes to insure

stability in classroom management and instruction). In many instances, they have chosen to jeopardize principalship opportunities by stating their values clearly and sticking to them, regardless of whether or not they align with the dominant views. When "moving up" would have required disrupting their own children or spouses, the CAPs in our study made clear choices to remain in jobs where they could stay connected with their families.

3. CAPs' value on caring extends beyond the school to the community. As they analyze situations and take action, they are sensitive to the broader sociocultural realities that affect both students and teachers.

Leadership Patterns

In working through the constant stream of problems and dilemmas they encounter daily, **CAPs put people first and respond to situations holistically**. Sometimes, this entails supporting a teacher's actions(important in the bureaucratic model) while at the same time being "fair" to the individuals effected (an aspect of Noddings' confirmation prescription). For example, one longtime CAP, Mary Alice Kincaid, told us about a situation[4] involving two ninth-grade girls who were written up for sharing a cookie and some whispered conversation after turning in their midterm exam papers. School policy specified that students couldn't talk during exams, and infringement of the rule called for a 20 percent reduction in grade. Ms. Kincaid was troubled by the disciplinary notice because she felt that under the circumstances, the penalty did not fit the infringement. "It was not cheating, it was discipline," she observed, recalling that the girls were only in ninth grade and it was their first, end-of-term exam. "It just really bothered me," she

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[4] This and subsequent situations are also described in Marshall, 1993. They are used here with permission. The names used to identify CAPs are pseudonyms.

said. I felt like it was a 'gotcha' game. And that's not what we're here for. We're here to help students to get the best education they can get." Torn between her desire to back the teacher and her conviction that the girls were being wronged, Kincaid was also mindful of the broader sociocultural context. The teacher was a Black, first-year teacher in a predominantly white school, and "some of the white people weren't working with him. I didn't want that to go on," Kincaid explained as she described how she agonized for weeks about how to resolve the matter. Following numerous discussions with the teacher, the girls, their parents, her principal and other teachers, she forged a compromise that seemed to satisfy all parties. The girls were required to write a paper, but were allowed to keep the grades they would have earned had the incident not occurred. At the same time, the teacher's interpretation of school policy was upheld. Reflecting on the incident (which occurred 11 years ago during her first year as an assistant principal), she observed,"You don't know what the right thing is all the time, but you do the very best that you can with that situation."

CAPs are **listeners, attentive and sensitive to nuances of situations**. They seek to give full consideration to the socio-emotional and affective concerns involved in a situation rather than rely on bureaucratic procedures and rules. CAP Michael Sullivan succeeded (between interviews on the day we visited his school) in defusing a situation that had all the makings of a media nightmare. "I can see the headlines, now," he chuckled: "Assistant Principal Suspends Student for Going to the Bathroom."

At stake was a teacher's prerogative to establish class rules — in this instance, a behavior management plan that required students to "pay back the time" if they left class to go to the bathroom — and a family's insistence that punishing their son because he had to go to the bathroom was unfair.

Sullivan concedes that the teacher's longtime policy "may have been a good one, but somehow it wasn't communicated to the parent." As a result, the student's mother was furious and threatened to go to the local TV station with her story after heated discussions with both Sullivan's co-AP and the principal resulted in a stalemate. The principal had ended his conversation with the woman on a less than conciliatory note, reportedly telling her that "the TV station doesn't make the rules here. We make the rules."

No stranger to such situations, Sullivan said, "So, I'm trying to put this fire out now. It's burning . . .and it's really about a power struggle between the teacher, the student and the parent." His solution: to let everyone "save face," a feat he accomplished by making it a "timeout-type issue and not a discipline-type issue." Toward the end of the day, we found Sullivan and the student engaged in a friendly conversation about what he was going to do after graduation, what his brothers were up to, and so on. They had already agreed that the student would report to study hall 15 minutes early the next day.

What allowed Sullivan to succeed where his principal had failed? A **willingness to listen**, a keen **knowledge of human nature**, and the ability to sit down and "have some **dialogue** with the student" were certainly key. In addition, however, Sullivan came to the crisis with a legacy of **trust**."If he were to retire," says Sullivan's principal, "I could never replace him. . . He's a local person. He lives here in the community, and he serves as a role model as well as a reality check. He can't be conned very easily because he knows kids and he knows their families. He knows when they're shooting him a line."

**Connections** and continuing with the heart of the community provide legitimacy and valuable understanding for any school administrator.

Sullivan has built up a fund of personal capital during some 17 years as assistant principal at the same school. "Parents have a nice warm feeling about the school when they see him," affirms his counterpart AP. "He brings a **continuity** to the position that no one else has." Built not solely on years of service, Sullivan's reputation for caring about kids and their families derives from daily practice — from translating his beliefs about education into concrete actions. Saddled with the traditional AP role of disciplinarian, he manages to 'humanize' his policing role by connecting with students at their level. "It's almost like a game," he explains. A few days prior to our visit, he had borrowed a bike abandoned on the grounds and rode it all around the school complex — upstairs and down — not at all deterred by the three-piece suit he typically wears to work. The students got quite a chuckle out of his "mobile patrol," he said, even though they knew he was as alert as always to potential trouble spots.

**Persistence**, following through with a teacher, student, or family, characterize CAPs patterns of intervention. Because they are genuinely concerned with people, they look at their work over the long term (in contrast to the shortterm and bounded purview of traditional administrators). They go beyond the strictly defined tasks when they solve problems and they follow up persistently even when problems go beyond the boundaries of their job descriptions.

As supervisors of teachers' work and students' behavior, CAPs **develop relationships** which are the grounding for motivating, controlling and inspiring to excellence those whom they supervise. **Thoughtful and sensitive**, they see nuances in people's efforts at good performance; they recognize the diverse and individual qualities in people and **devise individualized standards** of expectation and individualized incentives and rewards. One CAP

helps, on his own time, to solicit gifts for a special student auction held each year. His willingness to pitch in keeps both teacher and student motivation high. An elementary CAP dedicated an entire year to helping an inexperienced teacher develop the self-confidence and classroom skills she would need to continue in the teaching profession. By combining skills' training, coaching, and an ample measure of encouragement, this woman, with 22 years of first grade teaching experience to guide her, turned a potentially "failed" teacher into a promising professional. Another CAP chose to ignore signs[5] that an at-risk student had moved out of his district in order to ensure that the girl could have the continuity she needed by remaining in his school.

Values and Ideologies

The ideologies and values of CAPs are interconnected with their leadership characteristics. They are **empathetic and sensitive** as they work with people and **connect in a personal way** with individuals, even when enforcing rules and supervising and monitoring behaviors. In situations where they have the authority to judge, delegate, prescribe dictate, and order, CAPs are more inclined to mediate, negotiate, and seek compromises that will maintain connections and relationships. Dialogue and informal conversation, in school and beyond school, characterize the communications of CAPs.

While CAPs comply with bureaucratic demands for formal training and certification, they derive their power and legitimacy more from their abilities to be **insightful, reflective, and intuitive** than from any quantifiable set of skills or ranking on the hierarchical organization chart.

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[5] Like a sleuth, he deduced this move when he saw her bringing take-out breakfast from a fast-food store located only in another district.

Structures and the CAP

Organizational structures, for the most part, get in the way of CAPs. As self-directed, self-sufficient doers, CAPs avoid delegating and ordering others. They have difficulty working interdependently when it means a delay in solving a problem. While working in organizations with centralized policymaking, resource allocation, and order-giving, CAPs shape their work to be as decentralized as possible. CAPs repeatedly told us that the best thing their school districts, principals or superintendents did for them was to "leave [them] alone," "allow [them] to develop programming without interfering," or "give [them] the freedom and power to get things done." When they look at people and problems holistically and find policy, orders, roles, rules, and resources inadequate, they create their own, functioning as creative, street-level bureaucrats. Sometimes their independence causes people to scratch their heads and wonder, but unless there's a problem most principals are willing to respect CAPs' autonomy.

One CAP said he would rather make errors of commission than omission, that he'd rather act like a bull in a china shop than sit back and ponder about whether he was doing the right thing. In his view, the earlier he could intervene in a troublesome situation, the "more likely he would be able to help a kid and fix the situation." Another said nobody had ever tried to "stifle" him. "But if I'd screwed up, they most certainly would have held me accountable." The principal of a third CAP said he would "have concerns about him as a principal." The man was "too quick to act," sometimes had trouble relating to people, and lacked caution. At the same time, this principal recognized his subordinate's strengths. "He is motivated intrinsically," the

principal observed. "And he will take initiative. I give him freedom. He's the kind of person people depend on. . ."

Committed to solving long term problems and building relationships with people and community, CAPs eschew the incentives and rewards of movement up the hierarchy since it usually means disrupting relationships and diminished autonomy. Not wanting to move their families, maintaining flexibility over how they spend their time, disliking the political demands on principals, avoiding the "chaos" associated with working in the "central office" . . . these and similar concerns are among the reasons CAPs cite for choosing not to pursue a principalship or other upwardly-mobile positions.

## Theoretical, Practical and Policy Implications

Educational leaders know the public relations value of saying "I care." Political and collegial models of leadership incorporate this lip-service brand of caring. The CAP data demonstrate that it is possible for caring and leadership truly to be intertwined in the daily work of school administrators. Nevertheless, the writing, teaching, and theory of administration are silent about how to incorporate caring with leadership. Few texts incorporate values and ethics, never mind an ethic of care. As important, policy, structures and practice fail to incorporate caring. No mainstream texts on educational administration and no formal recruitment, training and selection policies validate caring. In fact, selection and promotion policies frequently reward the antitheses of caring. Further, this study finds that the individuals studied no longer (or never did) try to move to top leadership; many CAPs asserted that, in choosing to care about their schools and their families, they damaged their chances for upward mobility. Their practice of caring and traditional incentives for moving up through the educational administration hierarchy

appear to be at odds. As Noblit (1993) says, CAPs are "bouncing off the hierarchical model."

Our findings provoke a challenge to scholars of leadership, professional and organizational socialization, and educational philosophy, administration and policy. They point to a need to revise our thinking about fundamental values promoted by the rationalist tradition of policy analysis (Garms, Guthrie & Pierce, 199x; Marshall, Mitchell & Wirt, 1989) if CAPs' values are to be incorporated. To the traditional definitions of fundamental values (equity, efficiency, choice, quality) we must add caring. Further, assertions about the meaning and goals of education must go beyond technical-vocational biases, (e.g. Business Roundtable philosophies as discussed in Borman, Castenell & Gallagher, 1993) to encompass CAPs' hard work to create nurturant empowering, and community-building environments in their schools. Traditional theories must be altered to explain these anomalous CAPs: educators who, in spite of incentives, hierarchies and dominant professional norms, stay close to children, teachers and the larger communities served by their schools — making connections instead of distancing themselves, forming connected relationships in their work with students, parents and colleagues rather than seeking to standardize, manage and control them.

A few scholars have posed provocative and stage-setting challenges and questions about caring. Noddings' challenge to care in schools recognizes that a paradigm shift is needed to take us beyond theories that relegate caring to the low status positions (teachers, women) and, instead, reexamine and alter values and assumptions. Foster's (1986) call for critical humanist school leaders adds a second voice to Noddings' theoretical beginning, but he offers no evidence that they exist and survive. Regan (1990) and Marshall (1989)

postulate that the connected, caring, inclusive administrator is female, but they leave open questions like, "Can caring administrators prosper?" and "Can caring administrators be male?" This research on CAPs demonstrates that caring administrators do exist *in spite of* administrative theory, professional training and policies; they can be male or female; and job structures frequently interfere with caring.

We need to explore ways to alter job descriptions and career rewards so that they incorporate the natural order (eschewing the outmoded bureaucratic order) using what CAPs know. From the on-site observation of CAPs, it was clear that their activities had a purpose and order of its own — defined more by their sense of what's needed than by their defined job tasks or career norms. A natural order of work, activity and ethics can provide a reality-based order in loosely coupled (Weick, 19xx) systems like education. When scholars and policymakers construct theories and practices that emanate from the daily interactions and alterations of educators trying to meet children's needs and create caring communities in their schools, then school structures and the work of educational leaders will make more sense.

Practical and Policy Challenges

The practical and theoretical significance of this study are intertwined. Professional associations, university and district policies and programs should be re-examined so that:

1. Recruitment, job description, selection, promotions, training, career rewards and assessment policies can incorporate the alternative career motivations of CAPs. Extant policies buttress administrative career norms established on assumptions centering around traditional models for administrators and they support and reify the choices and lives of upwardly mobile managers. Those policies and norms must be realigned to support the

caring professional who centers his or her work around children's development, demands a stable family life and is ready, willing, and able to assert professional values that posit caring in schools.

2. Caring is incorporated as a valuable function to be modelled in school leadership; to care and be cared for are, as Noddings suggests, "fundamental human needs...we need caregiving, and the special attitude of caring that accompanies the best in caregiving if we are to survive and be whole" (1992, p. xi). For students and teachers to feel connected to their schools, indeed for learning to occur, educational administrators' behavior must be modelled to include caring.

Research Challenges

This study demonstrates the need for scholars and policymakers in the field of educational administration to:

1. Explore the subjective perspectives of atypical school leaders to uncover alternative views about what constitutes leadership and identify the range of values and behaviors available for new models of leadership;

2. Plumb the inner motivations of professionals who are guided by an ethic of care in order to refine an alternative model of caring that moves beyond the traditional, technical, rational, and policy-driven range of solutions to organizational problems;

3. Study how caring is expressed by CAPs and others to identify the connections between caring and leadership that develops shared commitment and meaning in schools, and;

4. Explore and identify the philosophical, structural and personal preconditions necessary to caring.

We do not suggest that caring is a panacea for our schools, nor do we urge adoption of caring as a moral imperative — although we might do well to argue both. We are convinced, however, that caring is a necessary condition for transforming schools into successful living and learning environments. Caring can create possibilities that do not exist in schools where children, teachers, staff, and administrators do not feel cared for. Many teachers and administrators already practice caring — both natural and ethical — but too often they are constrained by outmoded attitudes, structures and policies. Providing the opportunity and support for administrators, teachers and staff to care for students and one another should be a critical part of the school restructuring effort.

Our purpose here is modest: to put caring on the research and policy agenda. Seeing what caring educators can accomplish and how they go about "being there" for kids, teachers, parents and the community at large is ample incentive for promoting thoughtful and thorough consideration of caring as a promising fifth model of educational administration.

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